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CRITICAL NOTICES.

SEDER OHEL MÖED.

ספר אהל מועד¹ חלק ראשון² חברו הר"ר שמואל בן הר"ר משולם ז"ל מגירונדו³ קבץ פסקי דינים ע"ם ש"ע או"ח יו"ד ואה"ע, with explanatory notes להל סביב לאהל⁴, the former by the Chief Rabbi A. GAGIN, the latter by his son, M. GAGIN. Edited for the first time from a MS. and published by the brothers Abraham and Isaac Gagin in Jerusalem. 4to, 360 pp.

THE history of this work is wrapped in obscurity. We shall see that it was written in the first quarter of the fourteenth century. This follows from a date given by the author himself. Namely, there is an exposition on p. 36a [עה"מ] as to how a letter of divorce ought to be written. A תופס הונט, as customary at that time in Grenada in Spain, where our author probably lived, is given there שנת חמשת אלפים ושמונים לב'הע למנין שאנו . . . בגירונדא . . . [=1319]. Some time may, of course, have elapsed before the author published his work. But we must consider that this statement occurs at the end of the second part, we cannot therefore be far out if we assume the work to have been concluded two years later.

For full two centuries the work was as good as lost; no trace of its existence reaches us during that period. It is first mentioned about the middle of the sixteenth century in the works of R. Joseph Karo, e.g. *Beth Joseph to Tur O. Ch.*, § 70, and elsewhere. It again disappears, and only after a century it is again quoted by R. Chiskia di Silva⁵.

¹ In three parts, which we shall quote according to the initials of their titles: (1) מ"ח (= מערכת חמור), (2) עה"מ (= ענינה המשכן), (3) מה"ק (= משכנו). Each of these parts is subdivided into "Gates" (שערים), these again into "Roads" (דרכים), and further into "Paths" (נתיבות).

² The second part, which has not been printed yet, contains the דריי מועד.

³ The author himself spells this name with א at the end.

⁴ These are, in many cases, insufficiently surcharged with Pilpul, and so diffuse that they obstruct the entrance to the real אהל.

⁵ The passage quoted by him, *S. A. J. D.*, § 83, which is made so much of by R. Samuel Landan, *Nurec Bihore*, *II. J. D.*, 29, on the question whether

These are the only two witnesses of its existence during the period between the fourteenth and the second half of the seventeenth century.

To put, as it were, the last seal upon the fate of this work, it was mentioned by Azulai in the second part of his *Shem ha-Gedolim*¹. He gives a brief description of the work, says that it is of an old date², and refers us to his article: מו"הרר מנחם ב"ר שלמה לבית מאירי in his first part. It is evident that he means to say that this scholar was the author of our עה"מ, for in that passage he mentions a book of the same title among the MSS. of that author.

Azulai's statements are most reliable on the whole. Nobody was his equal in investigating Jewish literature, in his comprehensive knowledge, or in the examination of old dusty MSS. Yet the question arises, what are the reasons that the Rabbis who wrote commentaries on the work, and those who gave it their approbation³, attributed it to R. Samuel bar Meshullam? The two names are too different in sound to admit of the assumption of a clerical error. Nor is there any reason to charge the Rabbis with intentional mystification, for neither would they have been capable of it, nor would there have been an advantage in it. Who is right? This I meant when I said that there is some obscurity about the book, on which we shall now try to throw some light.

I may say at once that, for reasons to be given presently, I consider Azulai's information to be far from the mark, however good a guide he may be on other occasions. In the first place, the dates do not agree. According to Heilpern, סדר הדורות (ed. Maskil Leetan, p. 224 sq.), the מאירי died in 5066 (=1305), whereas our author was still writing his book in 1319 (v. supra). In the second place, the מה"מ of R. M., which Azulai really saw, together with the other MSS. of that author, can hardly have contained פסקים, because he had already written a comprehensive work on that subject under the title of בית הבחירה. The מה"מ of Meiri may, therefore, only have had the title in common with our מה"מ, but, for the rest, must have been totally different. Azulai considered both works to be identical, but the latter was not accessible to him, he only knew it from citations by Karo. This impression is strengthened on a closer examination of

the sturgeon belongs to the clean or unclean fishes, is found in our work, עה"מ, p. 14, path 4.

¹ s. v. מה"מ.

² He introduces it, i.e., as ספר קרמן, as having been frequently quoted by Karo. The latter has read our מה"מ, therefore Azulai can only have meant him.

³ Chacham Bashi I. Eljashar and his predecessor R. M. Panisel.

Azulai's notice¹. On the other hand, the editors must have found the name of the author on the title-page of the book, or else how should they have come by it?

But now the question arises as to who Rabbi Samuel was. Does his name occur elsewhere, and who were his teachers?

I have only conjectures to offer in reference to the two first questions, to which I shall recur again. But in answer to the last question, I believe I may give it as certain that his teacher was Rabbi Asher bar Jechiel². I base it upon the following arguments:—

(1) He writes on page 105 b (מ"ה), line 1 (at the top), והנאון . . . רבנו³, the view given here is found in Asheri's Commentary to b. Berachoth, p. 44 a.

(2) On p. 31 a (ע"ה"מ), l. 8 (at the top), we read the words בלל י"ט Responsa, that view is given by Asheri in his *Responsa*, וכ"כ רבי, 5 and 7.

(3) The author quotes, on p. 40 (מ"ה"ק), l. 3 (at the bottom), his teacher in the following terms:—וזה מורי פירש . . . (viz. that there is a difference between liquid and solid bodies in reference to the boiling on the sabbath). This is found in Asheri's Commentary to b. Sabbat, 3, 11.

In view of all this, I surmise that the notice found in the *Responsa* of Moses di Frain (מ"ב"ט), ii. 22, and repeated by Azulai, namely, that "Rabbi Samuel, the pupil of R. Asher, was the author of the ספר מאור," referred to our author, and that the work mentioned here is the "great work," to which he repeatedly alludes in אה"מ (supra, p. 346, n. 2).

I further wish to point out that our author, when quoting the רא"ב, abbreviated ר"א (of the twelfth century), never omits to introduce that name with the word אדונינו (א"ה ר"א). This, perhaps, entitles us to infer that our author and that scholar were relations. It is true other pupils are also wont to make use of that title when quoting their teachers, but a connexion of that kind cannot have existed between these two men.

This is all I could ascertain about our author, I now proceed to give some corrections of the text.

¹ Benjacob, s. v. אה"מ, must be corrected accordingly.

² Yet, he may have had other teachers as well. The passage יד"מ, 37 b, at the bottom, "And according to the opinion of my teacher," cannot refer to Asheri. Perhaps it refers to רש"א, also the latter died as early as 1310. For our author cannot have been young when he wrote his אה"מ, since he alludes in it to his "Great Work."

³ The passage is corrupt in our edition, we give a correction, infra.

P. 20 a (מ"ט), l. 3 (end), the following words must be added, according to the *Sefer Hashlamah*¹, which has recently been printed: וה'ג כונה קריאה בעיניו בכל הפרשיות שאם קורא להניה לא יצא ע"כ. But I do not consider the words וברכה א' של תפילין as an addition, but as an omission, through the error of a copyist, in the *Sefer Hashlamah*. This is shown by the concluding formula (עד כאן = ע"כ).

But the second line היה . . . י"ה in our אה"מ must be considered as an interpolation. This sentence may be a commentary to the words in *Sefer Hashlamah* . . . ויש בו כונה ביריעי". Herr Brody queries these words. This may also be the origin of the prayer said on laying the תפילין.

P. 41 b, l. 5, instead of ה"ר א"ב בר, read ה"ר א"ב בר, for the passage quoted here is found in the latter's work האשכול, p. 6².

P. 92 a, instead of . . . ולזה הסכימו ר"ם . . . read וכ"כ הר"ם, וי"א . . . ולזה הסכימו ר"ם . . .³ The author alludes himself to these two pages later. For p. 94 b, he says וכן כתב ר"ת וכן הורו יריעות האהל is therefore superfluous.

P. 105 b (at the top), וכן דעת ר"ם must also be altered into ר"צ. This disposes of the questions of the commentator, *ibidem*. The following passage, p. 42 b, is interesting: פסק לענין גינית . . . קרינה. The פסק, as given here, is also found, without any reasons being added, in "Mordechai" (at the commencement of the fourteenth century), Sabbath, 259. Later authorities objected to his (M.'s) view of the passage in Tossafoth Meilah, 24 b, s. v. פרומה, and built castles in the air for the purpose of solving the apparent contradiction⁵. But the force of the objection vanishes as soon as the grounds for the decision, as given by our author, have been read.

In spite of these faults, which are to be placed to the account of the editors and not of the author, the אהל מועד, like all works of the

¹ To Talmud Berachot, edited by M. Schochor, with Introduction and references by H. Brody. Berlin, 1893.

² l. c., p. 6, at the bottom.

³ *Editio Auerbach*, Halberstadt, 1867.

⁴ רבני צפת = רבני צפת. The author quotes of his younger contemporaries only, ר"ף and ר"ן, but not once R. Aaron of Lunel. This alone proves M. Gagin's explanation of ר"ם as רב מלוני (!) to be wrong.

⁵ Cf. the previous note. The Tossafoth meant here are b. Berachot, 44 a, s. v. על. Cf. מחצית השקל, § 208, 11. Also וקח (commencement of the thirteenth century).

ראשונים, is a very useful book, and may often be applied to the Halachah. It deserves to be widely known, and it is to be hoped that the editing of the second part will be entrusted to abler hands.

JERUSALEM, *December*, 1897.

L. GRÜNHUT.

DICTIONARY OF THE BIBLE.

Edited by JAMES HASTINGS, M.A., D.D. (T. & T. Clark.)

It was high time for the production of a new dictionary of the Bible. Smith's Dictionary in the later parts represents the state of biblical science as it was thirty years ago, and those thirty years have seen a greater change in point of view and accumulation of material than the three preceding centuries. Assyriology and Egyptology have become exact sciences in the interim; the whole of biblical geography and archaeology has been placed upon a firm footing by actual survey and excavation; Semitic philology has come to the aid of Hebrew grammar and dictionary, while the new sciences of institutional archaeology and history of religion, though still in the stage of guess-work, have valuable suggestions to make, at least as regards method. Besides all this, English biblical scholarship has assimilated during the past quarter of a century all that is best in German work, and it may be anticipated henceforth that England will before long commence to pay back some of her debts to Germany. Indeed, the works of Cheyne, Driver, and Robertson-Smith have not been without their influence on recent German scholarship.

The new dictionary published by Messrs. Clark shows in many directions the influence of these new aids to biblical research. The physical archaeology and the geographical details show on all sides the vast strides made in these directions during the past quarter of a century, though it is but fair to add that Sir George Grove's contributions to Smith's Dictionary left little to be desired in the latter regard. The illustrations of archaeological objects are scattered rather sparsely, and even when they occur are not so clear as might be desired, and it was somewhat doubtful policy inserting them in such a form. One wonders rather what will be the appearance of the block on page 304 after a few thousand impressions have been taken from it. Indeed, throughout, what are technically known as "half-tone" blocks are very unsatisfactory. The illustrations contrast very